



State of Connecticut
DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

TESTIMONY OF THE DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

IN SUPPORT OF:

**H.B. NO. 5485: AN ACT CONCERNING THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF IDENTIFYING
INFORMATION PERTAINING TO VICTIMS OF VOYEURISM**

JOINT COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
March 10, 2014

The Division of Criminal Justice respectfully recommends the Committee's JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT for H.B. No. 5485, An Act Concerning the Confidentiality of Identifying Information Pertaining to Victims of Voyeurism. This bill provides for a logical and appropriate extension of existing statutes that seek to protect the identity of innocent victims of sexual assault and other sex crimes.

The name and address of a victim of sexual assault or injury or risk of injury, or impairing the morals is already exempt from public disclosure pursuant to Section 1-210 of the General Statutes (i.e., the Freedom of Information Act). H.B. No. 5485 would extend the same confidentiality and protection to victims of the crime of voyeurism as defined in Section 53a-189a of the General Statutes. The bill provides for similar protections against the disclosure of a victim's name and address in the course of court proceedings.

Extending confidentiality to victims of voyeurism also is consistent with the sexual offender registration statutes, which classify certain acts of voyeurism as a "non-violent sexual offense" for which the perpetrator can be required to register.

The crime of voyeurism represents an invasion of privacy that occurs under circumstances where the victim has expectations of privacy. The disclosure of identifying information such as the name and address of the victim only compounds the wrong that has been committed, subjecting the person to the threat of public embarrassment. There is no valid public purpose to be achieved by publicly identifying the innocent victim of such a violation of privacy. We would note that the same statute in question exempts disclosure of the arrest records of juveniles. Should not the victim of a crime be afforded at least the same consideration as one who commits a crime?

In conclusion, the Division of Criminal Justice recommends the Committee's JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT for H.B. No. 5485. We thank the Committee for this opportunity to provide input on this matter and would be happy to provide any additional information or answer any questions the Committee might have.